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C O N F I D E N T I A L VATICAN 001465

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/WE (VAN CLEVE)

FROM EMBASSY VATICAN/MESSAGE NO. 42/01

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/15/11

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [VT](#) [UNHCR](#)

SUBJECT: VATICAN PLANNING ACTIVE STRATEGY ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

CLASSIFIED BY CDA A.I. JOSEPH MERANTE, REASON E.O. 12958
1.5 (B) AND(D).

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REF: STATE 44405

1. (C) POLOFF DELIVERED REFTEL DEMARCHE TO MSGR. LEO BOCCARDI, VATICAN MFA DESK OFFICER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ON MARCH 15. MSGR. BOCCARDI REVIEWED THE POINTS FOR THE 57TH COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS ENTHUSIASTICALLY. HE CLAIMED NOTABLE CONGRUENCE BETWEEN MANY VATICAN AND USG POSITIONS, PARTICULARLY ON THE CERD (COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION) PROCESS, UNDERLINING THE RISK OF INFRINGEMENT ON THE JUDICIAL SOVEREIGNTY OF SIGNATORIES. MSGR. BOCCARDI ENDORSED THE WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM (WCAR) TO BE HELD IN DURBAN, OUTLINING A PROACTIVE VATICAN STRATEGY IN THE LEAD-UP TO THE CONFERENCE.

2. (C) VATICAN STRATEGY IN THE RUN-UP TO WCAR WILL FEATURE PROMINENT PAPAL CONDEMNATIONS OF RACISM. THE VATICAN WCAR PROGRAM WILL SEEK TO COMBAT RACISM THROUGH A) EDUCATION, THROUGH WORKSHOPS IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS; B) INCREASED INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE; AND C) AN AGGRESSIVE DEFENSE OF MINORITY GROUPS, WITH THE VATICAN PLEDGING TO PRESSURE EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS TO SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS OF THE ROMA MINORITY IN PARTICULAR.

3. (C) MSGR. BOCCARDI CONCURRED WITH USG CONCERN THAT REGIONAL BLOCS MAY FRUSTRATE CONSENSUS ON CRUCIAL POINTS. HE REFERRED TO A RECENT PROCLAMATION IN TEHRAN BY MUSLIM MIDDLE EASTERN GOVERNMENTS THAT PALESTINE WAS BY DEFINITION A MUSLIM NATION, AN ASSERTION THE VATICAN DEEMED UNACCEPTABLE. HE WARNED OF A POSSIBLE EFFORT AT THE WCAR

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TO PORTRAY PALESTINIAN HARDSHIPS AS RACIST (ANTI-ARABIC/SEMITIC) IN ORIGIN.

4. (C) MSGR. BOCCARDI WARNED OF POSSIBLE VATICAN CONFLICT AT DURBAN IF AN EFFORT WERE MADE TO ENSHRINE SEXUAL ORIENTATION AS GROUNDS FOR DEFINITION OF A RACIAL MINORITY. MSGR. BOCCARDI DECLARED THE VATICAN COULD ENDORSE LANGUAGE ABHORRING DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF QUOTE SEX OR GENDER ENDQUOTE; HOWEVER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION AS SUCH WAS AN UNACCEPTABLE CATEGORY FOR THE VATICAN. ACCORDING TO MSGR. BOCCARDI, THIS DEBATE WAS ADVANCED BY THE BRAZILIAN DELEGATION AT A PREVIOUS CONFERENCE IN SANTIAGO. MSGR. BOCCARDI WAS CAREFUL NOT TO CRITICIZE USG POSITIONS. FURTHERMORE, HE VIGOROUSLY CONDEMNED DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE TOWARD LESBIAN OR GAY PERSONS. MERANTE

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